



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **PARENTS PAY UP OR PAY THE PRICE FOR OVERDUE CHILD SUPPORT** *CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM THIS PROGRAM OF LAST RESORT*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— More than 6,000 Tennessee mothers and fathers who have refused to pay child support are losing their licenses. The parents' professional, recreational and drivers' licenses are on the line following the Department of Human Services annual license revocation program.

The parents come from all walks of life. They are teachers, real estate agents, nurse's aides, security guards, pharmacists, boxers and dentists and they all have something in common—they are not supporting their children. The overdue child support ranges from a minimum of \$500 to a maximum of \$112,000, and offenders hail from every corner of the state.

"Willful failure to pay child support is a crime," said DHS Assistant Commissioner for Child Support Mike Adams. "The license revocation program is one penalty for that crime. License revocation is often a last resort for getting parents to do the right and legal thing by their children, and it's working. Thousands of parents contacted through this program have heeded the wake-up call and are now paying their child support."

Nearly \$1.6 million in back child support has been collected since parents were notified in October that they faced losing their licenses for failure to pay. The largest single payment was \$21,000. The average payment was \$190. Parents who cannot pay the full amount of overdue support are allowed to work out a payment plan with their local child support office.

However, thousands of parents are still not paying and face losing their drivers' and/or business, professional or recreational license. Approximately 7,000 licenses are in the process of being revoked from the Departments of Safety, Commerce & Insurance, Health, Education and the Tennessee Wildlife & Resources Agency. Some parents are having more than one license revoked.

State law allows DHS, which administers the Child Support Program, to revoke the licenses of parents who fail to pay their court-ordered support. Other enforcement tools include administrative wage assignments, liens and tax intercept. All of these collection methods mean children are receiving their much-needed support and those dollars have increased steadily over previous years. So far this state fiscal year, DHS has collected more than \$187 million in child support.

For more information on the Child Support Program, visit the DHS website at:  
<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/child-support.htm>

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